The Repeater

The W6VVR Newsletter

It's ANTENNA Time!

The weather is warming up.

It's not raining.

Time to get outside!

And build some antennas!!

The Newsletter for March 2025

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THE VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB WELCOMES YOU

The Vaca Valley Radio Club has proudly served the Northern Solano County Area since 1988. We pride ourselves in providing a friendly place for radio amateurs to meet and improve their operating skills.

We participate in public service events throughout the year and are always ready to assist with communications during times of emergency.

Browse our website for more information about our club. If you have any questions, please e-mail us at w6vvr@w6vvr.net or call 707-448-5665 for assistance.

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95 625- 0143.

An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988.

General Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM See the directions on the last several pages.

Meetings Are Wheelchair Accessible

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A Message from The Editors of The Repeater

Welcome to March!

I hope everyone is continuing their work with the Morse code files that are on the club website and diligently learning the characters listed for January, February, and now March.

I am switching over to using my Gmail account from the coffeeholic1a@yahoo account. I was getting way too many emails to keep looking for Club emails. The new email is srb6101@gmail.com

I am proposing a monthly fox hunt now that the weather is starting to turn better. I am proposing we do it the Saturday after the club meeting.

Perhaps we can combine it with a message passing demonstration and practice for those that aren't hunting.

Set up 3 or 4 different 6ft pop ups with a table at each one inside the park possibly at each entrance far enough apart so people can see us no matter which entrance to the park they come in.

We can demonstrate that Amateur Radio, using Winlink, AREDN, CW, and Phone, are all still vital communications means for passing messages and gathering information.

Lets focus on what we can do within and for our communities and not push the emergency response line the ARRL has been feeding down our throats for the last several years.

Let people see us using amateur radio for more than emergency response.

Continued on the next page.

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Anyone interested in balloon transmitters?
Perhaps the club can do a balloon launch and see how far it will carry?

There is a lot involved in doing one and there is the possibility that we will loose the investment.

Possibly try to launch one or more during field day?

Let the public see that we aren't just interested in emergency communications.

Let the public see we do other things with communications.

That's all I have to say for this month

73

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A Message from The President

Unfortunately, as of the publishing deadline, I did not receive any message from the President Servando Miramontes, K6SRV

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A message from the Vice President

Unfortunately, as of the publishing deadline, I did not receive any message from the Vice President Dan Martin N6ETR

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A message from the Treasurer

Dear Members,

Financially the club is in a much better state than it had been in the past few years.

Here's a quick synopsis of our fund status.

Bryan, KBØA

Vaca Valley Radio Club Notes 2025					
		Project Fund	Repeater Fund	Total Funds	Non Ded Funds
2024 Foward		616.00	2748.90	5768.51	2403.61
Year to Date Received		0.0	127.00	456.00	329.00
Year to Date Paid		0.0	0.0	92.64	92.64
Year to Date Funds		616.00	2875.90	6131.87	2639.97

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A Message from the Secretary

Unfortunately, as of the publishing deadline, I did not receive any message from the Secretary Mike Gregory WB6WYF

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Meetings recorded by the Secretary

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB MEETING
2/13/2025

Meeting opened by President Servando Miramontes, K6SRV, 1905 hours.

Pledge of Allegiance held

Servando provided and update on the instillation of the Fusion system.

The UHF link is off line and will be for some time due to the pending installation.

Brian has requested that as many people as possible use the Fusion system.

The WIRES X portion of the system is off line until the project is completed.

Servando gave an explanation of WIRES X and Fusion and it's relation to other digital modes such as DSTAR and DMR.

A complete explanation of the new system will be provided by Brian when the project is completed.

In a related subject, Don Preston suggested another location for the system. It appears the previous owner of Jelly Belly has a new residence located up high with a superior view of the area. The suggestion was noted but no other action was taken.

Continued on the next page.

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Art Aronsen gave a follow up presentation on the pending Alcatraz Island Dxpedition.

He is working with the parks service representative, Naomi. Nothing is final as of this meeting.

There will be some limitations on the number of participants, 4 to 6 people only.

For those going the first boat to the island will be free as it carries only volunteers and employees. Anyone coming later than the first boat will pay normal visitor fare.

The event will start at 0830 and end prior to 1630 as that is the last boat off the island.

No food or drinks will be allowed to be taken to the island. There is a snack shack on the island for those who want to eat.

Servando initiated a discussion of the upcoming Field Day.

We have been offered the use of the Solano County Fairgrounds by their director. There will be no fee charged the club and we will be able to set up where we wish.

After comparing this offer and the reuse of Branden Island, the attending club meeting members voted to hold the Summer Field Day at the Solano County Fairgrounds. Servando will insure all the required items, insurance etc. will be taken care of prior to signing any required paperwork.

Continued on the next page.

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Stephen Bartels initiated a class on the construction of a, "tape measure Yagi antenna."

After a short presentation a club construction project took place.

No further business appearing before the club the meeting was adjourned at 2035 hrs.

Respectfully submitted

Michael Gregory, WB6WYF
Secretary.

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A special announcement fron Servando about upcoming Dixon City events.

I wanted to send an update regarding the events we covered in our January face-to-face meeting, which were the Dixon May Fair Parade and Dia De Los Muertos events.

I just confirmed with Shuana to put us down for both.

Dates for events are as follows:

Dixon May Parade: Sat May 10th (Dixon)

Dia De Los Muertos, Sunday Nov 2 (Dixon)

I have the following members already locked in for both events, based on our January meeting show of hands:

K6SRV (Myself),
KM6BXZ (Bob),
KB6UOF (Gary),
K6QQX (Russ),
W6GP (Frank)

We can still use more volunteers.

Lets show Dixon we can be there for them!

Servano
K6SRV

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This Month We Continue To Learning Morse Code.

This month we will be learning the characters D, U, B, V, 3, 7, C and slash (/).

I hope that everyone is learning correctly and efficiently and has mastered the first months characters. I am available to do some online practice sessions using zoom as well, perhaps pick a few nights each week to go online and practice as a group. I believe that Monday, Wednesday and Fridays are good days to use since Tuesdays are the net and Thursdays is a meeting night.

The second Saturday night of the month I am still available to do ecomm and message practice so I usually am tied up with that.

With luck, by the end of June we can all be trained CW operators.

And who knows? Perhaps we can run a net on 10 meters some night all done in CW.

73

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The Results of the Tape Measure Antenna Build

During the February Meeting, I demonstrated how to build a "Tape Measure" antenna. The information is listed in the February newsletter.

Using broken tape measures, and short pieces of PVC, I demonstrated how someone can make an antenna.

We had about 5 people build one after the demonstration and everyone that made one had a fun time.

The real fun came when, as they went outside, they found out the antennas would work and they could hit the repeater .

We started making the antennas right after the meeting ended and including clean up and testing we finished making the antennas by 2130.

Everyone that did build one had a lot of fun.

Continued on the next page.

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Stephen
KK6ZJC

73

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The First Foxhunt For 2025

On Saturday March25, 2025, we will be holding the first foxhunt of the year. It will be at Alan Witt Park in Fairfield. The park is located between West Texas street and Woolner Avenue.

The goal will be to enter the park from the Woolner Avenue entrance and meet at the picnic tables.

Perhaps set up a couple of small pop ups near the West Texas Street entrance and the Woolner Avenue entrance and one near the picnic tables as information stands.

We would have use of a bbq pit to cook on or just do sandwiches. We will of course also be close enough to most fast food shops so we could do that even.

We would love every club members participation and assistance with this fox hunt as it will be a fun day and event for all.

Contact me at srb6101@gmail.com for more information.

Stephen
KK6ZJC

73

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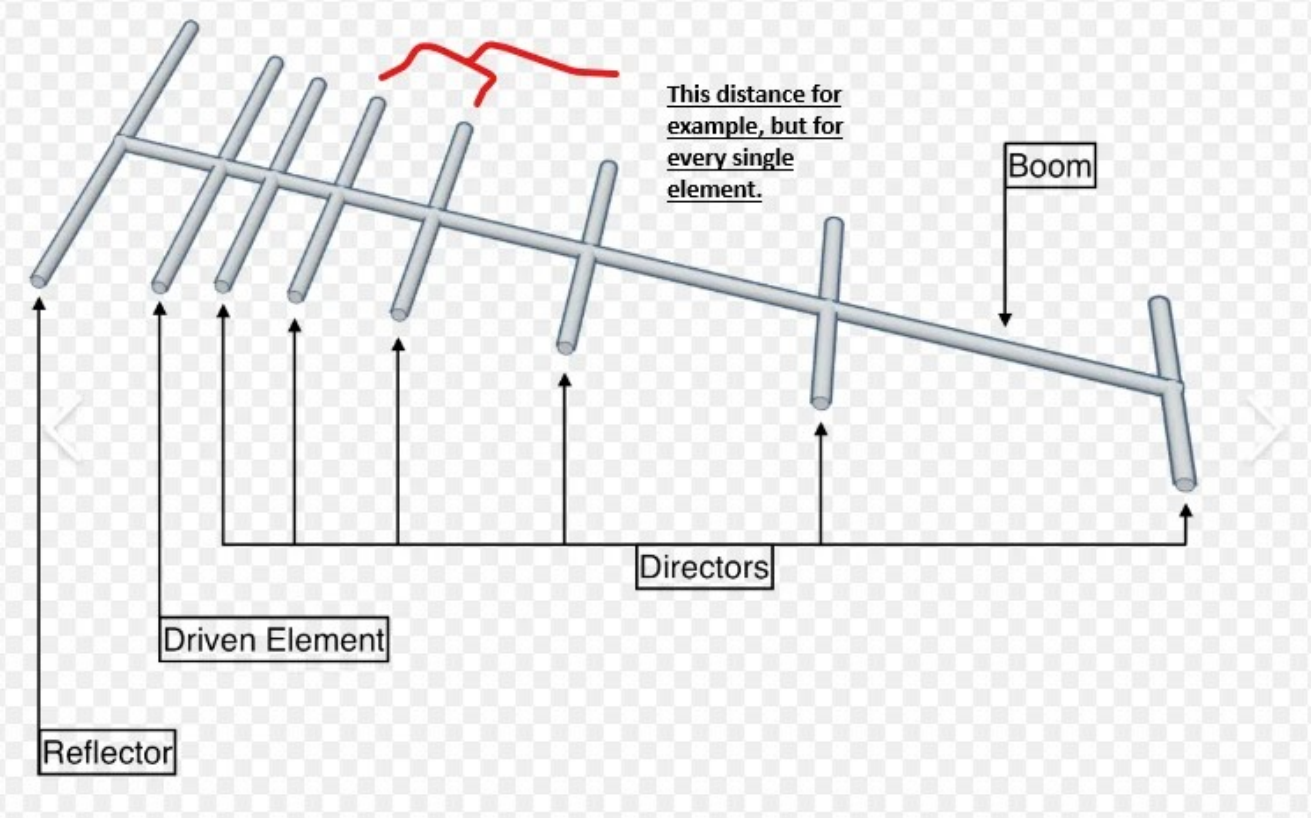
The Learning Corner

This month we will explore beam antennas.

A beam antenna is a directional antenna. Its name comes from the fact you can "beam" a signal in a certain direction without it going other directions as an omni directional antenna does. It works on the principle of phasing a signal using parasitic elements (the reflector and directors) in a single direction.



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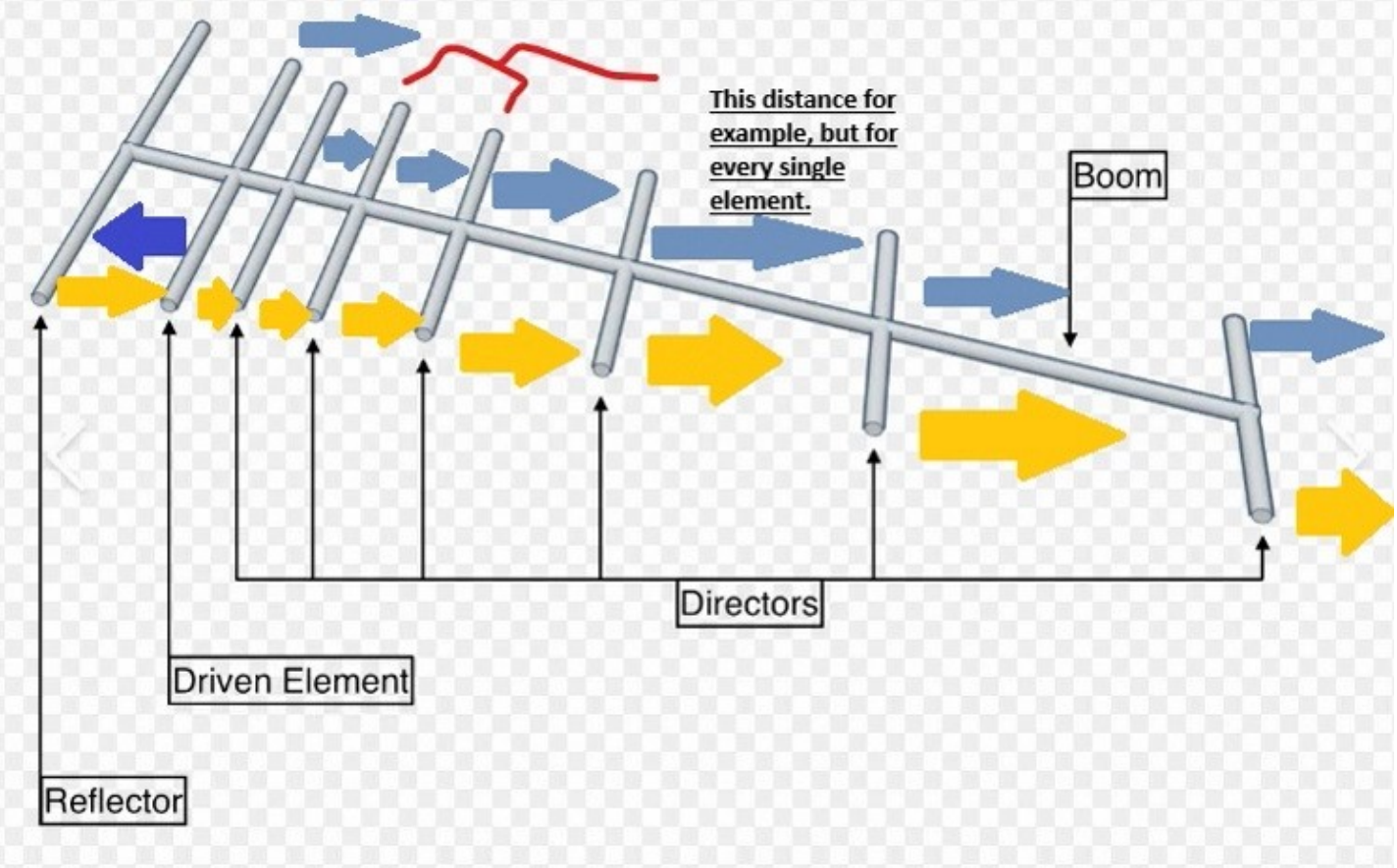
Basically we take a signal that is being transmitted from the driven element, bounce it off the reflector so the signal reflects back in time with the sine wave being transmitted. Then ,the directors enhance the signal to direct it in the direction you want to send it.



The reflected signal enhances the signal moving forward to make your signal appear stronger. It reduces signals behind the antenna so the power that would be "wasted" traveling in the wrong direction is focused back in the direction you want it to move in.

The directors guide your signal in the direction you want them to go in. As a result more energy is moving in the direction the beam is pointed.

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Beam antennas consist of at a minimum 2 parts:

The driven element which is nothing more than a half wave dipole

and

A reflector which is 5% longer than the driven element.

When making a beam, you only need one (1) reflector placed behind the driven element for it to become directional.

They may also include one or more director elements. Those are generally 5% shorter than the driven element.

The formulas needed to make a beam antenna

Using the simple tried and true generic formulas on how to make beams that I learned as a teenager way back in the 1970's (Ok! Yes I am old.) before computer modeling programs became the norm:

For the driven element, the formula is the same as making a dipole antenna:
468/f

For the reflector it is (468/f) X 1.05
(This adds the extra length we need for the reflector.)

If we add directors onto the antenna, the formula for a director element is:
(468/f) X 0.95
(This shortens the antenna element so it directs the signal)

Continued on the next page.

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However, you can add directors in front of the driven element to direct the signal in a more compact direction. Depending upon the number of directors you add, your gain will increase with each director and the radiated pattern begins to narrow.

Each additional director be shortened by an additional 5%

Once you have the formulas to make the beam elements then you need the formulas to space the elements:

For the reflector / driven element the formula is:

(468/f) X 0.20

This formula will give fairly good reflective properties to the antenna.

You can adjust the spacing of the reflector to the driven element from 0.15 up to the 0.20 amount to try and maximize the reflected signal. Any distance shorter or longer and the reflected signal will not phase with the driven signal.

For the driven / director / director element the formula is

468/frequency X 0.15

This formula will allow for a fairly decent directional properties to the antenna. You can adjust the spacing of each director from the 0.15 amount down to 0.10 or up to 0.17 to try and maximize directivity. Any distance shorter or longer away from these numbers will mean the signal will be out of phase and you will not get as strong a signal and will loose gain.

As you add directors the spacing between each director should be the same.

The spacing measurements work for any beam antenna, yagi, quad, or delta.

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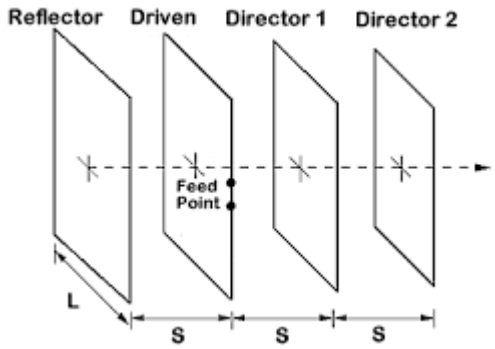
A quad antenna is a full wave loop antenna with 4 equal sides



A delta antenna is a full wave loop antenna with 3 equal sides

To make a quad or delta antenna the formula for the driven element is:
1005/frequency

This creates a full wave length antenna because the quad or delta antenna is a full wave loop antenna.

Continued on the next page.

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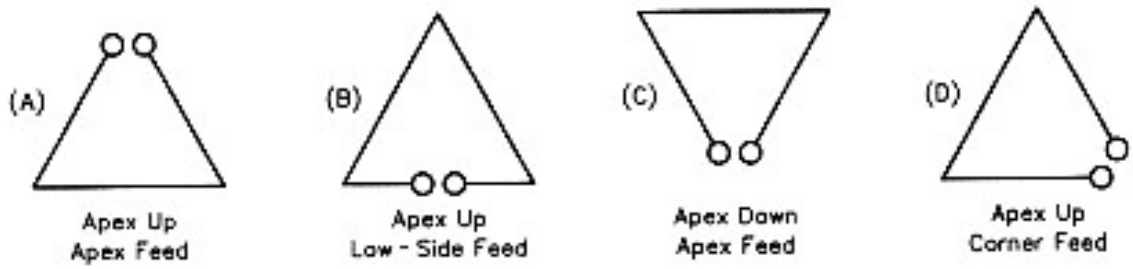
To calculate the spacers for a quad antenna use following:

(1005/frequency) / 4 = S

now multiply S by 1.414. to get the diagonal spacing from corner to corner: d=Sx1.414.

That number is the length of the support rod you will need to hold up the opposite ends of the square.

For a delta antenna, you can mount the antenna either with the point facing up at the top or down towards the ground.



	Polarization	Radiation Angle
A	Horizontal	Moderately High
B	Horizontal	High
C	Horizontal	Moderately High
D	Vertical	Low

Feed Impedance ≈ 100 Ω

To hold up 2 sides of the antenna at the top you accomplish this by using a mast and supports to spread the wire at the top of the mast.

You then bring the sides down together at the bottom.

To mount the antenna with the point up, you use a spreader down at the bottom and bring the sides up at the top at the antenna.

Continued on the next page.

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All antennas need a matching system to mach them to the feed line.

There are hairpin matches, gamma matches and several others.

That might be a topic for another time.

Hope this simplified explanation gives you a slight bit of understanding how a beam antenna works.

That's all for now.

73

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Field Day is Coming!

And it will be here faster than you think

The club needs to start focusing on June field day.

We have the location, which is Solano Fair Grounds, now we need the volunteers to make the magic really happen.

We need people willing to assist in cooking,

Volunteer with setup and breakdown of the common areas, (The cooking and food tents).

We need someone to volunteer as a GOTA (Get on the air) station.

We need a Meet and Greet person at a table.

We need a volunteer to do club member check in as they arrive to the fairgrounds. Be a talk in for everyone attending.

We will need volunteers on Sunday to do a final policing of the area to ensure no one left anything behind, (pets, children, garbage, equipment, etc)

We need to start planning out and visualizing our sites.

We need all the club members to participate!

Lets show everyone that we can work as a team and a group.

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This is the length of the field we can use if anyone uses the actual RV parking

We will loose about 250 feet off the field.

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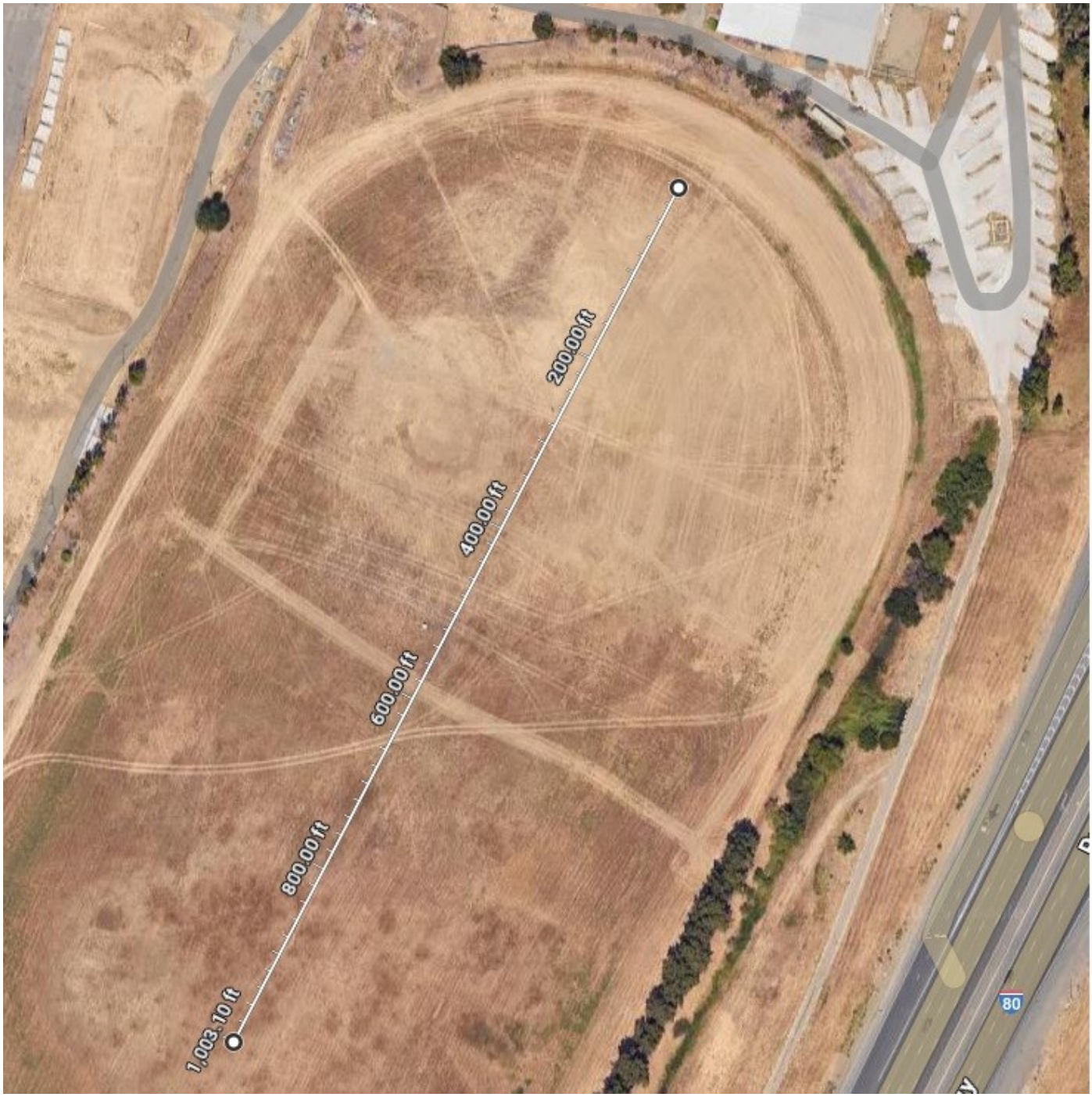

We gain a lot of distance if we are all on the field.

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And the field is seriously wide!

One great thing about being at the fairgrounds is.....

across the highway there is a Home Depot, a Costco, a Target, as well as a CVS Pharmacy.

So if you realize you forgot that rope or you don't have enough wire...you can still get some (although to be fair...we are supposed to be working with only what we have on hand.)

The entire board would love to see this field filled with all of the club members!

73

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A Special Message from The Editors of The Repeater

I would like to find out how many members would be interested in the idea of a random, without any warning, communications drill.

One that would be announced via both the repeater, and perhaps sent out as a text message from Winlink to members cell phones.

One that would test the ability to truly see how many people could respond in an emergency situation without warning.

One that we might deploy to a location.

One that might not be done in good weather.

One that might be done during the night.

Let me know your thoughts.

You can contact me about it at srb6101@gmail.com.

Stephen
KK6ZJC

73

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Links for equipment and parts for your Station

This will be by no means a complete list, and you should verify if what you need is available.

Obviously, I am going to start with amateur radio suppliers such as:

Ham Radio Outlet

DX Engineering

Gigaparts

Next are antenna parts suppliers:

American Radio Supply

Amateur Radio Supplies

Continental Steel

Stock Car Steel

Aluminum Wholesalers

Continued on the next page.

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And electronics parts suppliers:

Mouser Electronics

Jameco Electronics

Arrow Electronics

Digikey Electronics

Newark

Elliott Electronic Supply

Test Equipment:

Test Equipment Depot

Siglent Technologies

Jameco Electronics

Fluke

As I have said this is by no means a complete list but you should recognize most names on the list.

73

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Recurring Club Meetings and Events
March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4 Club Net	5	6 Cow Town	7	8
9	10	11 Club Net	12	13 Cow Town Club Meeting	14	15 KK6ZJC Ecomm training 1900 hrs
16	17	18 Club Net	19	20 Cow Town	21	22 KK6ZJC Zoom Morse Code Practice 1900 hrs
23	24	25 Club Net	26	27 Cow Town	28	29
30	31	4	5	6	7	8

Monthly Meetings are held at the Nut Tree Airport Vacaville CA	KK6ZJC can be reached by email at srb6101@gmail.com.	

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Information About Recurring Club Meetings and Events

The club net is at 2000 hours EVERY Tuesday using the W6VVR Repeater:

Receive 145.470 Transmit 144.870 CTCSS Tone 127.3

The Club Cow Town is a general rag chew every Thursday on the W6VVR Repeater. It starts about 1000-1030 local time using the same frequencies as above,

The monthly Club meeting is always held the second Thursday of the month at the Nut Tree Airport. The meeting starts at 7PM local time and generally runs through about 9PM. Directions to the meeting can be found at the end of the newsletter.

Every Saturday the same week as the club meeting at 1900 hours local time KK6ZJC will be using zoom to practice passing messages.

Anyone wishing to join in contact KK6ZJC by email at srb6101@gmail.com.

Please put ECOMM TRAINING in the subject.

I will generally check my emails right through Saturday night about 1830 hours local time. After 1915 hours if no one joins the meeting, I shut Zoom down

It is a great way to learn how to pass messages using the ICS-213 form, or practicing sending messages for the general public using the ARRL forms.

I will be running a zoom session on the third week of the month for anyone that wants to do practice session for Morse code. If you send an email to srb6101@gmail.com and let me know I will send a link to the zoom meeting.

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Special Club Meetings and Other Events in the area

I am listing all special events the club is looking for volunteers to assist in, fox hunts, or events out of the ordinary.

March 15th, - Alan Witt Park in Fairfield, CA. Foxhunt. 0900 to 1600.

Dixon May Fair Parade May 10, 2025. Looking for club members to assist with communications.

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Contest

Below is link to a great contesting website by fellow Amateur Radio Operator Bruce Horn, WA7BNM

https://contestcalendar.com/

The calendar list contest in multiple ways.

It is easy to use and regularly updated.

Hope that it helps you with your contesting!

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The Club Repeater(s)

The Vaca Valley Radio Club sponsors repeaters on several bands.
The club provides some financial support, but the owners provide a substantial portion of the cost of their operation.
The efforts of the owners are greatly appreciated.

The main repeater for the club is:

Call Sign: W6VVR
Output Frequency: 145.470MHz
Input Frequency: 144.870MHz
CTCSS tone (P.L.): 127.3Hz
Offset Frequency: 600KHz
Offset Direction: Minus

Vaca Valley Radio Club Sponsored Repeaters
As Of November 1, 2023

Rptr Out	Offset	P.L.	Call/ Location	Linked Repeaters
145.470	Minus 600 KHz	127.3	W6VVR Mt Vaca	Linked to 441.650 MHz
440.025	Plus 5 MHz	127.3	WV6F Mt Vaca	
441.650	Plus 5 MHz	100.0	N6VLF Fairfield	Linked to 145.470 MHz
145.140	Minus 600 KHz	77.0 DG-ID 00-00	Moderate level	Can operate Yaesu Fusion AMS Can be linked to 145.470 MHz or 441.650 MHz

Visitors are welcome to use the repeaters.

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EchoLink and AllStar Nodes

The Vaca Valley Radio Club operates both an EchoLink and an Allstar Nodes that link to the
clubs main repeater on 145.470 MHz on top of Mt Vaca.

NOTE: EchoLink is UP, Allstar node is UP.

Call Sign: W6VVR

EchoLink Node 454 312 W6VVR-R

Allstar Node 51 094

Visitors are welcome to use the nodes.

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2025 Officers:

President:	Servando Miramontes	K6SRV
Vice President:	Dan Martin	N6ETR
Treasurer:	Brian Steinberg	KB0A
Secretary:	Mike Gregory	WB6WYF

2024 Board of Directors:

Art Aronsen	WD6BQX
Chris Swanson	KJ6DLF
Mike Rogers	KN6MIO
Stephen Bartels	KK6ZJC

Net Control Operators

1st Week Of The Month	Bob Hawkins	KM6BXZ
2nd Week Of The Month	Chris Swanson	KJ6DLF
3rd Week Of The Month	Frank Garay	KJ6RWQ
4th Week Of The Month	Dan Martin	N6ETR
5th Week Of The Month	Dan Martin	N6ETR

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VOLUNTEER POSITIONS:

Membership	Bryan Steinberg	KB0A
Repeater Trustee	Brian Hagen	KK6BXP
Repeater Committee Chair	Brian Hagen	KK6BXP
Newsletter Editor	Stephen Bartels	KK6ZJC
Webmaster	Bryan Steinberg	KB0A
Net Control Coordinator (Filled by the Vice President as per the Club Constitution)	Dan Martin	N6ETR
Activities Committee Chair	Don Preston	KM6INR
Monthly Message Passing Practice Net	Stephen Bartels	KK6ZJC
Foxhunt Coordinator	Stephen Bartels	KK6ZJC
Parks on the Air Coordinator	Servando Miramontes	K6SRV
Bicycle Events Coordinator		
Parade Events Coordinator		
Winter Field Day Committee		
Dixon Mayfair Parade	Servando Miramontes	K6SRV
June Field Day Committee		

Continued on the next page.

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Volunteer Positions (Continued)

Dia De Los Muertos	Servando Miramontes	KK6ZJC
Merriment on Main (Vacaville)		
Dixon Tree Lighting		
Fairfield Tree Lighting		
December Meeting		
Public Information Officer		
Winlink Committee Chair		
FL-Digi Committee Chair		
Morse Code Training Sessions		
AREDN Committee Chair		

We still have numerous committees that need chairpersons and volunteers for the upcoming year (2025). (See the list above.) They need to be filled for the upcoming year by younger volunteers and those with experience to guide the club forward into the future.

This is your club. You can make it a great club by participating in meetings, events, and nets, or you can watch the club wither away and die from lack of participation by ALL members.

It is in your hands, are you going to watch the club end? Or, are you going to jump in and help steer the club forward to the future?

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Vaca Valley Radio Club, Inc

Membership Application/Renewal Form

November 2019 Dues are payable annually.

New Members Please Fill in All Fields Completely
Renewing Members Please Provide Name and Call Sign,
Other Fields *Only if there are changes*

Member Information

FCC Name:_____

Street:_____

Street 2:_____

City:_____

State:_____ Zip-Code+4:_____

Home Phone:_____

Cell Phone:_____

Call Sign:_____

License Class:_____

ARRL Member?_____

Member No:_____

Name Badge Name_____

Payment Information

Member Dues: $25.00 _____

Additional Family Members: $2.00 _____

Student: $5.00 _____

Repeater Donation: _____

Total:_____$_____

Paid by Check: $_____

Check number: _____

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Family Member (Spouse or Children)

FCC Name:_____

Call Sign:_____

License Class:_____

ARRL Member?_____

Member No:_____

Name Badge Name_____

Family Member (Spouse or Children)

FCC Name:_____

Call Sign:_____

License Class:_____

ARRL Member?_____

Member No:_____

Name Badge Name_____

Family Member (Spouse or Children)

FCC Name:_____

Call Sign:_____

License Class:_____

ARRL Member?_____

Member No:_____

Name Badge Name_____

Family Member (Spouse or Children)

FCC Name:_____

Call Sign:_____

License Class:_____

ARRL Member?_____

Member No:_____

Name Badge Name_____

Family Member (Spouse or Children)

FCC Name:_____

Call Sign:_____

License Class:_____

ARRL Member?_____

Member No:_____

Name Badge Name_____

Family Member (Spouse or Children)

Name:_____

Call Sign:_____

License Class:_____

ARRL Member?_____

Member No:_____

Name Badge Name_____

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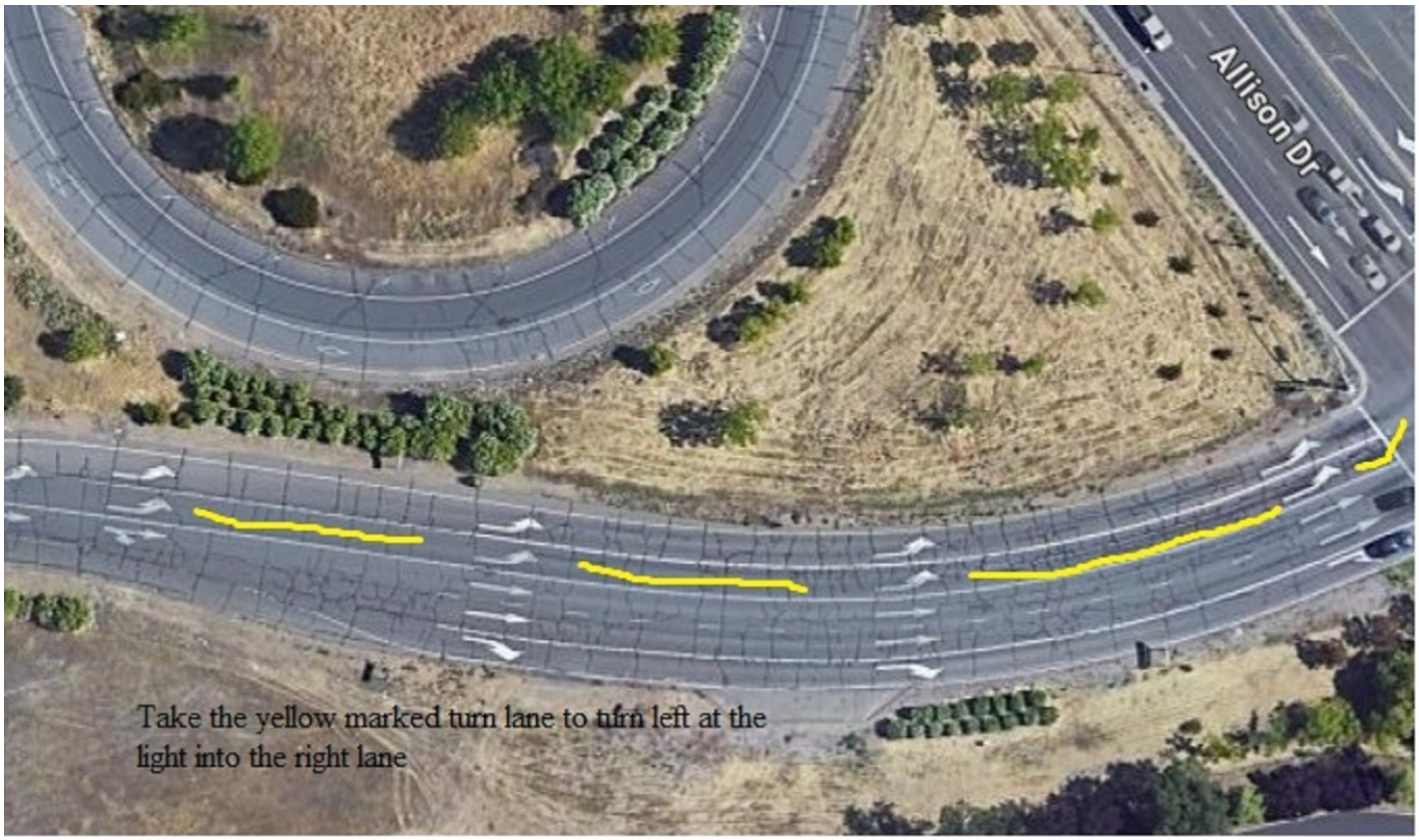
Directions To the Monthly Meeting from Fairfield, Suisun City And Other Areas West of Vacaville

Coming from Fairfield: Take Highway 80 East Bound. Take exit 55 Nut Tree Parkway / Allison Drive. Stay to the left and enter the right left turn lane



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Turn left from the right turn lane and stay in the right lane. Be careful not to get back on the highway entrance.

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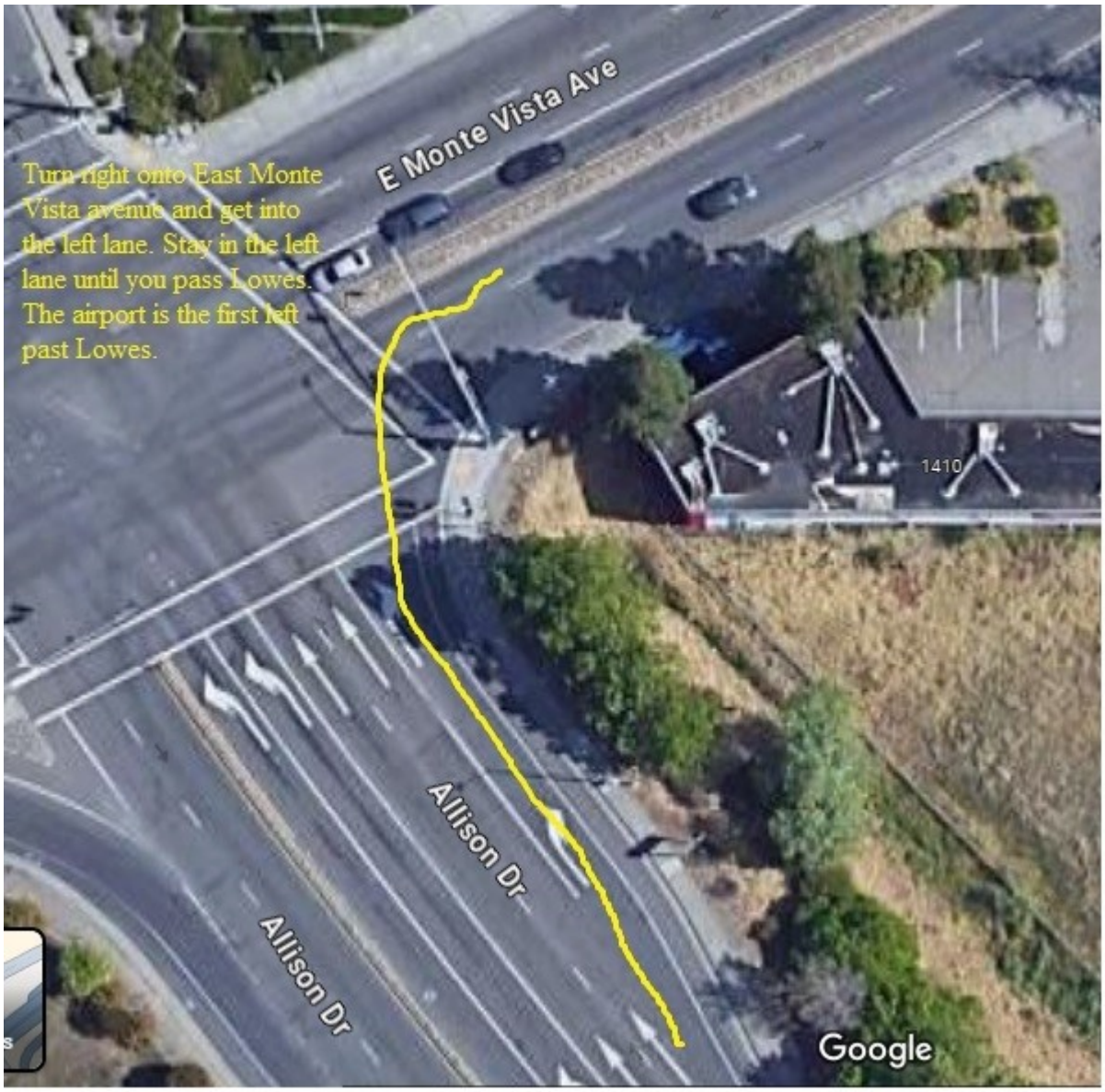
Go over the overpass and make the right turn onto East Monte Vista Avenue.



Get in the left lane of E Monte Vista Avenue and drive East until you pass Lowes.

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The airport is immediately past the Lowes Parking lot.

Turn left and drive to the airport parking lot on your right.

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Directions To The Monthly Meeting From Dixon, Sacramento And Other Areas East of Vacaville

Coming West from Dixon take the E Monte Vista Avenue exit, (exit 55)

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Take the Right turn Lane at the exit

Stay in the right lane until the light.

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At the light turn Right and get into the left lane.

After making the right turn, get into the left lane and drive East until you see Lowes.

Turn left and drive to the airport parking lot on your right.

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